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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 000851

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/FO, NEA/ELA
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/12/2019

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SUBJECT: HIZBALLAH PUBLICLY RECRUITING COLLEGE STUDENTS FOR
SUMMER CAMP, INCLUDES MILITARY TRAINING

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Denise Herbol for reasons 1.4 (b) and
(d).

SUMMARY AND COMMENT

¶1. (C) Publicly-available brochures and radio advertisements in early July confirm Hizballah is actively recruiting college students to participate in a "summer camp." The camp's activities include cultural, educational, religious and political discussions and activities. In addition, one "boys only" session implies military training at an undisclosed location for 11 days. No Lebanese officials have questioned the content or conduct of these camps and Hizballah's recruitment and outreach activities continue unabated. End summary and comment.

¶2. (SBU) Poloffs learned July 27 that Hizballah was publicly recruiting college students, via pamphlets and radio, to participate in a summer camp scheduled to begin July 17 at the "Al-Qaim" compound (nfi). According to our NGO interlocutors, the pamphlets were available in public meeting spaces, such as mosques or schools, in Beirut's southern suburbs (the Dahiye) that are a Hizballah stronghold. The radio advertisements were broadcast on Hizballah's radio network, "Noor," and included a contact telephone number to obtain additional information.

¶3. (SBU) The brochure details cultural, educational, religious, and political discussions and activities. For example, a discussion of Hizballah's "vision of Lebanon as a state" and English and French language instruction were among the activities offered. In addition, the program included one module related to "mobilization" or "recruitment" with sessions open to both girls and boys. However, one session within this module was reserved for "boys only," to occur at an undisclosed location over the course of 11 days. Our interlocutors advised us that this "boys only" session implied military training, without being specifically labeled as such. The program and advertisement were coordinated by Hizballah's educational division, according to the advertisement. (Note A scanned version of the pamphlet provided to the Embassy by one of our NGO interlocutors has been sent to NEA/ELA for reference. End note.)

¶4. (C) Embassy contacts tell us this is not the first time that Hizballah has organized such camps for college students. However, the last time they recalled seeing advertisements for such camps was in 2006. Hizballah, which also operates an ongoing "Scouts" organization for younger students, actively continues its recruitment and outreach efforts in public view. However, neither Lebanese municipal nor state authorities have challenged either the content or conduct of Hizballah's summer camp.
HERBOL